

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 14592 221316Z

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4946

INFO SECDEF IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

CINCUSNAVEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, XO, MR, SE, UK

SUBJECT: LONDON SUNDAY TIMES ON DIEGO GARCIA EVACUEES

1. ON SEPTEMBER 21 THE "SUNDAY TIMES" JOINED THE DIEGO GARCIA PRESS BATTLE WITH THREE COLUMN FRONT PAGE ARTICLE "SHABBY TRUTH ABOUT THE EXILED ISLANDERS." SEPARATE IN-DEPTH STUDY OF TWO FULL PAGES, INSIDE ON PAGES 10 AND 11, TRACES HISTORY OF BIOT AND DIEGO GARCIA ROUNDLY CASTIGATING UK AND US ON BASIC CONCEPTION OF BIOT, SECRECY OF FUNDING AND TREATMENT OF ISLANDERS. COPIES OF ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES.

2. MAIN BURDEN OF STORY IS THAT UK AND US CONTENTION THAT COPRA PLANTATION WORKERS WERE TRANSIENT CONTRACT WORKERS IS FALSE. COPRA PLANTATION ON DIEGO GARCIA HAD BEEN A GOING PROPOSITION SINCE 1780'S AND THAT AS EARLY  
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AS 1870 SOME ISLANDERS WERE LEAVING COMPANY QUARTERS AND

BUILDING THEIR OWN HOUSES. THIS LED TO "LA VIE FACILE" WHICH WAS SPOILED BY UK/US DECISION TO TURN ISLAND INTO A "BASE" AND TO SEND ILOIS TO SQUALOR IN MAURITIUS.

3. ARTICLE SPECULATES ON NATURE OF USN FACILITY LINKING IT TO FBM SUPPORT AND STATING RUNWAY CAN BE USED BY B-52 AIRCRAFT. USN CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL ARE CRITICIZED AS "BEING STONED ALL THE TIME" AND FOR DRIVING ON WRONG SIDE OF ROAD ON THE ISLAND.

4. "SUNDAY TIMES" REPORTERS INTERVIEWED SEVERAL ILOIS, MARCEL MOULINIE OF FORMER COPRA COMPANY AND RN LT. CANTEL (FIRST BRITISH ISLAND COMMANDER) AMONG OTHERS. IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY PICTURES OF ISLANDERS, OF FORMER COPRA PLANTATION AND A DETAILED MAP OF ISLAND.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF ARTICLE IS NOT IN NEW REVELATIONS; ALMOST ALL INFORMATION IS OLD. BUT ITS VERY LENGTH AND APPARENT SCHOLARLY APPROACH WILL MAKE IT AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR CRITICISM OF DIEGO GARCIA FACILITY. HMG COMES IN FOR MOST CRITICISM BUT USG IS SEEN AS EVIL EMINENCE PUSHING UK INTO UNWISE ACTIONS.

6. WE EXPECT "SUNDAY TIMES" ARTICLE TO GENERATE FURTHER QUERIES (ALTHOUGH NO NATIONAL NEWSPAPER MENTIONS DIEGO GARCIA SEPTEMBER 22). WE WILL REFER QUESTIONS ON RE-SETTLEMENT OF COPRA WORKERS TO HMG. WE WILL GIVE INFORMATION ON BACKGROUND ON NATURE OF FACILITY AND STATUS OF FUNDING PER AVAILABLE GUIDANCE. ONE RESULT OF ARTICLE WILL BE TO MAKE HMG MORE ANXIOUS TO HAVE AGREED PRESS LINE ON ALLEGED DEAL INVOLVING USE OF POLARIS R&D FUNDS FOR CREATION OF BIOT.

RICHARDSON

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## Message Attributes

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